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The first issue of the IRCD Bulletin describes the scope and functions of the Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged. Noted is its focus on the psychoeducational development of socially disadvantaged children and youth. To aid professionals working in this field, IRCD serves as an information clearinghouse and publishes bibliographies on selected aspects of compensatory education. The various other services are described. The document also contains a selected bibliography on cognitive development of disadvantaged children and youth, with an introductory overview by Edmund W. Gordon. (NH)

IRCD BULLETIN

A bi-monthly publication from the Information
Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged

Project Beacon, Graduate School of Education, Yeshiva University
150 West 56th Street New York, N.Y. 10019

Volume I, Number 1

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Introducing a Service to the Profession

The IRCD BULLETIN is addressed to
educators, psychologists and others
who are concerned with the psycho-
educational development of socially

disadvantaged children and youth. It is one of several related services now
available to the profession from the Information Retrieval Center on the Dis-
advantaged, recently established at the Graduate School of Education,
Yeshiva University, as part of its "Project Beacon" — a program of re-
search, training and dissemination activities related to the psycho-education-
al development of disadvantaged populations.

One of the most significant developments in American education during
the past few years is the upsurge of interest in programs and practices which
are designed to help compensate for the observed educational handicaps of
socially disadvantaged young people, mainly children and youth who predomi-
nate in rural and urban slums. In the wake of this development, there is
widespread need and demand for relevant information and insights. Just
what do we know about the developmental patterns and special educational
needs of socially disadvantaged children and youth? What educational pro-
grams and practices are effective in coping with the problems involved?
What helpful instructional and other materials are available?

The Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged undertakes to
help satisfy this need. It is designed to serve as a clearing-house for infor-
mation concerning problems, theory, research, programs and practices,
materials and other developments in the field of compensatory education —
on the elementary, secondary and collegiate levels, in this country and
abroad.

Operationally, the Center assembles as complete a collection as
possible of materials relating to the education of socially disadvantaged
children and youth — books, reports, articles, newspaper clippings, cur-
riculum bulletins, research proposals, and descriptions of compensatory
programs and practices. Many articles and other materials are abstracted
and entered on coded Keysort Cards, thus facilitating their immediate re-
trieval when needed. Bibliographies on selected aspects of compensatory
education are continuously developed. All of these materials are made
available to persons with professional interests in the field.

More specifically:

1. The collection of books, reports, articles, newspaper clippings and
other materials is available for use at the Center.
2. Copies of available abstracts of articles and reports on specified topics
are supplied upon request.

3. Selected bibliographies are published and distributed from time to time, and special bibliographies are prepared and supplied upon request.
4. Other requests for information are fulfilled in so far as resources permit.
5. The IRCD BULLETIN is published and distributed regularly to persons and institutions indicating a desire to receive it.

These services are available on a non-profit basis, although there are nominal charges to help cover publication and distribution costs of the BULLETIN and for requests which make substantial demands upon the Center's personnel.

Although the Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged is quite new, a very substantial body of materials has already been assembled, classified and organized for use — and the Center's collection is expanding constantly. Students, teachers, administrators, investigators and others who are concerned with the education of socially disadvantaged young people are invited to make use of these materials. They are also invited to send (or call attention to) materials which they think should become a part of the Center's collection, and also to suggest developments warranting mention in the BULLETIN.

Scope of the IRCD BULLETIN

The IRCD BULLETIN is published bi-monthly, September to May. It will usually include (1) the identification and discussion of some sub-

stantive issue, research finding or notable programmatic development in the field of compensatory education; (2) brief notes on significant events in the field; and (3) bibliographies on selected topics.

One such bibliography is included in this issue. Others will follow — on such topics as social and emotional development among disadvantaged children, academic achievement, compensatory programs and practices on the sub-collegiate and higher education levels, relevant instructional materials, professional personnel for depressed-area schools, and school segregation and integration.

The Cognitive Development of Socially Disadvantaged Children and Youth: A Selected Bibliography

Introduction

The bibliography in this issue is drawn from work related to cognitive development in disadvantaged populations. This is by no means accidental, but reflects the fact that the major relevant research efforts to date have concentrated on problems more directly related to cognition and have tended to neglect problems more traditionally viewed as having affective development at their core. On the other hand, demonstration and service efforts have tended to give equal emphasis to cognitive and affective development in statements of objectives, but in practice have been found to give operational emphasis to cognitive function. This dichotomy in emphasis is understandable but unfortunate.

Much of the research and service effort directed at the disadvantaged has come from persons who have deep humanitarian as well as professional and scientific concerns. In an earlier period, this humanitarian commitment and the great influence of progressive education and psychoanalytic concepts led to an affective emphasis — often to the neglect of a cognitive emphasis. However, these same concerns, more recently influenced by revised and new concepts in learning, educability and cognition, have resulted in the current emphasis on cognitive development. This emphasis is also a product of our rapidly increasing recognition of the demand for conceptual competence in modern technological societies.

We know that the disadvantaged child will be an even more disadvantaged adult if we are unsuccessful in helping him to master the basic academic skills and to move on to mastery of the process of problem conceptualization, analysis and synthesis. This concentration on cognitive development reflects, in part, the conviction that we must not be so consumed by our sympathy for these children or our concern with their social adjustment that we continue to neglect to prepare them as conceptually adequate participants in society's mainstream, where they must meet mainstream standards.

The choice between cognitive and affective emphases in the education of disadvantaged children is complicated by at least two facts.

First, many of the same societal forces which make conceptual competence essential to survival also make personal-social-affective adequacy an equally essential tool of survival. In the rapidly emerging new society of man, the ability to create and utilize ideas and the ability to manage one's self and to utilize one's self in meaningful and productive relations with others have replaced the ability to use one's physical strength and manual skill as tests of survival and instruments of upward mobility. Both affective and cognitive competence have emerged as critically essential.

Second, we have not made much progress in significantly improving the intellectual functioning and academic achievement of disadvantaged children through unilateral approaches. Questions of motivation, attitude, self-concept, life-space perception, aspiration and affiliation-alienation are gaining recognition as phenomena, not of greater importance than intelligence, cognitive style, perceptual habituation, level of symbolization and quality of intersensory exchange, but of co-importance — of equal importance as mechanisms of adaptation and learning which interact in the developmental process.

There is then no choice between affective and cognitive emphases, but rather the imperative that our research and service efforts reflect a single affective-cognitive emphasis — a dual focus to which a few educators have consistently given at least theoretical emphasis through the years. IRCD BULLETIN'S choice of cognitive development as its initial bibliographic supplement is not intended to give support to a unilateral focus on cognitive development in the education of either disadvantaged or more privileged children, but to call attention to one of the two critical areas of development involved.

E.W.G.

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The Editor.